

REMARKS

Claims

Claims 6, 7, 9-24, and 47-71 are pending in this patent application. Claims 6, 7, 9-24, and 47-71 are rejected. Claims 6, 47, 55, 60, 64, 66, 70, and 71 are amended. No new matter has been added.

First Section 103 Rejection

Claims 6, 7, 9-13, 15-19, 22-24, and 47-71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Peterson et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0027639) ("Peterson") in view of Walker et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0003988) ("Walker").

Peterson describes a system and method for playing a game of skill. During the method, a player initiates a session through use of a game client 14 such that the player may play a skilled game (paragraph 56). The game client 14 communicates with a master server 701 and receives a list of game servers that are currently available (paragraph 56). This server list is sorted by at least one of bandwidth and network latency so as to allow a game client to select a game server which is closest to the location of that game client 703 (paragraph 56). Alternatively, the game server closest to the game clients location may be selected automatically (paragraph 56). In addition, in alternate embodiments, the game client may communicate with game servers without interacting with the master server (paragraph 56). Such may be the case where a game client has set up preferences or is resuming previous game play (paragraph 56). A game client may interact with various game servers in order to peruse the games listed at those particular game servers and select a game to play 704 (paragraph 56).

Walker describes an apparatus for planning and customizing a gaming experience. The apparatus includes a "gaming device" that may refer to any electrical, mechanical, electromechanical and/or other device that may accept a wager, may follow a process to generate an outcome, and may pay winnings based on the outcome (paragraph 47).

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Peterson nor Walker, considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a gaming apparatus as recited in claim 6. For example, the combination of Peterson and Walker does not disclose or suggest that “said casino gaming server determines during the wait state whether a signal indicating a non-selection of said casino gaming server is received within a predetermined period of time of the wait state, and if the signal indicating the non-selection is received during the wait state, the connection with said controller is terminated”. Rather, Peterson discloses that a game server that is automatically selected by a game client based on a location of the game server and that the game server lists a game that is selected for play, and Walker discloses a gaming device. There is no teaching in the combination of Peterson and Walker of how a connection between a casino game server and a controller is conditionally terminated. Accordingly, the combination of Peterson and Walker does not disclose or suggest that “if the signal indicating the non-selection is received during the wait state, the connection with said controller is terminated” as called for by claim 6. Thus, claim 6 would not have been obvious over the combination of Peterson and Walker.

For at least the same reasons set forth above, the combination of Peterson and Walker does not disclose or suggest “the server gaming apparatus that enters a wait state and determines during the wait state whether a signal indicating a non-selection of the server gaming apparatus is received via a connection with the client gaming apparatus within a predetermined period of time of a wait state, and if the signal indicating the non-selection is received during the wait state, the connection with the client gaming apparatus is terminated” as called for by claim 47.

Moreover, for at least the same reasons set forth above, neither Peterson nor Walker, considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest “determining via a connection with the client gaming apparatus whether a signal indicating a non-selection of the server gaming apparatus is received within a predetermined period of time of the wait state; terminating the connection with the client gaming apparatus if the signal indicating the non-selection is received within the predetermined period of time of the wait state” as called for by claim 55.

Additionally, for at least the same reasons set forth above, the combination of Peterson and Walker does not disclose or suggest that “the server gaming apparatus determines during the wait state whether a signal indicating a non-selection of the server gaming apparatus is received within a predetermined period of time of the wait state, and if the signal indicating the non-selection is received within the predetermined period of time of the wait state, the connection is terminated” as called for by claim 60.

Further, for at least the same reasons set forth above, the combination of Peterson and Walker does not disclose or suggest “the server gaming apparatus determines during the wait state whether a signal indicating a non-selection of the server gaming apparatus is received within a predetermined period of time of the wait state, and if the signal indicating the non-selection is received within the predetermined period of time of the wait state, the connection is terminated” as called for by claim 66.

Moreover, the various dependent claims include the recitations of the corresponding independent claims and would not have been obvious over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, claims 6, 7, 9-13, 15-19, 22-24, and 47-71 are patentable over Peterson in view of Walker.

Second Section 103 Rejection

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Peterson in view of Walker, and further in view of Grimm et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,345,297) (“Grimm”).

Grimm discloses a network match making system and method. In the method, during performance of server late binding, a network match maker maintains a pruned list of qualified servers for a match offer (col. 6, lines 11-12). A plurality of clients join the match offer in the usual way (col. 6, line 13). The attributes of the new client are first compared to those of the match offer (col. 6, lines 13-15). If they match, a plurality of properties of network links are compared (col. 6, lines 15-16). The match maker compares the properties of the network links between the new client and the member

clients of the match offer to the instance attributes of the match offer (col. 6, lines 16-19). If they match, the properties of the network links between the client and the pruned list of servers is compared to the instance attributes of the match offer (col. 6, lines 19-22). If one or more of the communications links between the new client and the pruned list of servers meet the requirements of the match offer the client is allowed to join it (col. 6, lines 22-25). The network match maker then prunes the list of servers associated with the match offer to eliminate any for which the properties of the communications link from the new client to the server did not meet the instance attributes of the match offer (col. 6, lines 25-28).

Claim 14 depends from independent claim 6. As described above, claim 6 is would not have been obvious over Peterson in view of Walker, and Grimm discloses a list of servers that is pruned based on a plurality of attributes of a client and a plurality of communication links between the servers and the client. Grimm does not disclose or suggest how a connection between a casino game server and a controller is conditionally terminated. Accordingly, none of Peterson, Walker, or Grimm, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest that “said casino gaming server determines during the wait state whether a signal indicating a non-selection of said casino gaming server is received within a predetermined period of time of the wait state, and if the signal indicating the non-selection is received during the wait state, the connection with said controller is terminated” as called for by claim 6. Hence, claim 14, which includes the recitations of claim 6, would not have been obvious over Peterson in view of Walker and Grimm.

Third Section 103 Rejection

Claims 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Peterson in view of Walker, and further in view of Crumby (U.S. Patent No. 6,638,170).

Claims 20-21 depend from independent claim 6. As described above, claim 6 is patentable over Peterson in view of Walker. Further, Crumby is not cited to address the deficiencies mentioned above with respect to a combination of Peterson and Walker. Rather, Crumby is cited to disclose that a “controller is programmed to provide said


network server with a gaming apparatus identification and data to authenticate said gaming apparatus identification, wherein said controller is programmed to receive a network identification from said network server if said network server accepts said gaming apparatus identification and said data to authenticate said gaming apparatus identification” (Office Action, page 16). Accordingly, none of Peterson, Walker, or Crumby, considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a gaming apparatus as recited in claim 6. Hence, claims 20-21, which include the recitations of claim 6, are patentable over Peterson in view of Walker and Crumby.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, including any extension fees, which may be required or credit any overpayment directly to the account of the undersigned, No. 504480 (Order No. IGT1P213/P000657-001).

Respectfully submitted,
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